

Business Gateway Initiative

Governance Board Meeting

JUNE 14, 2005

Meeting Facilitators:

- Justin Van Epps SBA

Knowledge Agent:

- Marisol Rodriguez BG Strategy

Meeting Participants:

Neil Sattler, DoEd
Bill Burdett, DOJ
Eldrich Frazier, DOI
Charles Job, EPA
Bruce Borzino, GSA
Keith Thurston, GSA
Donna Eden, HUD
Charlie Havekost, HHS
Don Arbuckle, OMB
Timothy Wang, OMB
Shivani Desai, OMB
Jodi Wharton, SBA
Jerry Williams, SBA
Jennifer Lisaius, SBA
Carole Campbell, SSA
Barbara LaCour, USDA
Adjoa Cathcart, BG PMO, SBA
Justin Van Epps, BG PMO, SBA
Franklyn Matthews, BG PMO
Cameron Hogan, BG PMO
Kim McGoff, BG Strategy
Marisol Rodriguez, BG Strategy
Barrett Summerlin, BG Strategy

Dial-in Participants:

Tracy Back, EPA
Toby Henderson, DOE

Meeting Location and Time:

2nd Floor, Eisenhower Conference room, Side A, 1:30 – 2:30 PM

Purpose:

- Share recent accomplishments
- Report on outreach findings
- Share Business Gateway plan going forward

Expected Outcomes:

- Set expectations on upcoming funding decisions and next steps

Meeting Agenda:

- Welcome and introduction
- Accomplishments
- Outreach research findings
- Plan going forward
- Wrap up / Next steps

Meeting Summary

Justin Van Epps provided an introduction and reviewed the meeting agenda. The discussion focused on what the accomplishments were in FY05 and the outcomes that Business Gateway is striving towards in FY06 and FY07. Justin Van Epps also provided a high level overview of the feedback received from different stakeholder groups, including the partner agencies. This feedback confirms that the outcomes and associated outputs are in line with the needs of the business community.

There are still lingering questions surrounding forms processing and whether it is in or out of scope for Business Gateway. Agencies also gained clarity surrounding the FY07 budget process and were invited to participate in a working group established to deal with the funding algorithm and allocation issues. Notes from the meeting and discussion around these concerns are below.

Business Gateway

Business Gateway is responsible for “Making it Easier for Business to do Business.” Going forward, this will be accomplished by reaching for the following core components:

- **Easy access to government information and services.**
- **Issue-based search.**
- **Plain language compliance.** Businesses don’t understand the government and what they need to do to comply.
- **Electronic information submission.**

In FY05, Business Gateway has completed the following:

- Launched business.gov (including the forms catalog).
- Increased collaboration through the establishment of five interagency workgroups.
- Launched pilot for SSCR/Surface Coal. Special thanks went out to those agencies that helped make this pilot a success.
- Validated Business Gateway plan and value proposition with business community and partner agencies.

A handout showing the outcomes and associated outputs for FY05-FY07 was distributed. This handout breaks out the activities by lane and shows both current and new outcomes based on the research that was completed. For example, the Portal Lane is now driving to the outcome of consolidated information, research and tools. These outcomes and supporting outputs are the results of what we heard for the business community focus groups and from the agency interviews. It is the intention of Business Gateway that these new outcomes will help ensure that the program is meeting the needs of the business community.

The Business Gateway PMO is looking to the partner agencies to serve as subject matter experts in these outcome fields, understanding that there are not the resources available to allocate full or partial time staff to Business Gateway. Thus, the contract support dollars will go up in FY06 and FY07 to ensure that there is proper support on the ground to get the program work done.

Questions regarding how the numbers were established were raised during this time in the meeting. Justin Van Epps (Program Manager) provided FY03 and FY04 background information to the group. Today Business Gateway has allocated 80% of what agencies have provided to Business Gateway through the MOU process. A special thank you went out to the agencies for participating in the MOU process, allowing most of the funding to be received in March. Because this process occurred, Business Gateway was able to get contracts in place, although some of the carry over money from FY05 was also used. The money itself has been approved by the Governance Board, however, how the money will be spent remains an open decision. The

Business Gateway program team will facilitate the same process that was used last year to determine who the funding should be spent.

Outreach Research Findings

Partner Agency Interview Findings

The Business Gateway PMO and Strategy team would like to thank partner agencies for participating in interviews to discuss expectations for the Gateway and for its strategic direction. These interviews were very insightful, and there was a consistent message across agencies that BG must refine its scope, its audience and focus on compliance issues. These and other issues are listed below under “Top Priorities,” followed by additional priorities agencies identified.

Top Priorities

- Redefinition of the scope, value and audience of the Business Gateway is needed
- Business Gateway needs to shift the “forms paradigm” to electronic information submission
- Need to focus on compliance issues for businesses
- An understanding needs to be reached that no systems will be “turned off” because of Business Gateway

To clarify the final bullet in the above top priorities, the PMO/ Strategy team would like to emphasize that BG is an outward-facing initiative, focused on increased service to the public; while other eGov initiatives are focused on reducing redundant systems.

Secondary Priorities:

- Businesses should be able to fill out information only once. That information should be stored for future updates.
- There is a need to figure out how Business Gateway can help business do business with government.

Less Pressing Priorities

- Agencies have their mission specific forms processing systems, Business Gateway should not try to duplicate these processes
- There should be little emphasis placed on helping large corporations because these organizations have specialists that have one-on-one relationships with agencies.
- Business Gateway should not be directed to citizens; it should focus on businesses.

It was also noted that the CIO Council provided feedback during its recent offsite meeting which was helpful in the clarification of scope for the Business Gateway; namely a desire to shift the paradigm of being “taxed” to “buying” a product. This, and all feedback received from the CIOC was taken into account when clarifying the scope and value proposition of Business Gateway.

Business Focus Group and Trade Association Interview Findings

Rockbridge Associates conducted seven focus groups in four cities, segmented by size, sector and profession to ensure broad coverage, and interviews with 11 associations representing different industries, professions, and special business communities. The research shed light on what segments of the business community Business Gateway should target, and what content and functionality it should prioritize based on those segments’ needs. Research findings are summarized below. For the full findings of these interviews please ask your Advisory Group representative for the slide deck that was sent to them.

What Businesses Want from Business Gateway. Focus group participants identified the issues below as top expectations from Business Gateway:

- **Personal contact.** Businesses hope Business Gateway can help them locate and interact more effectively with the right government employees for compliance issues.
- **Plain language compliance assistance.** A major concern of businesses and expectation of Business Gateway is help with compliance, in “plain language,” and on issues relevant to them that they are unaware of
- **Issue-based searches.** Businesses see a lot of value in an integrated portal that helps them search and locate government information around problems and issues they face (rather than around agencies and regulations)
- **Searchable, fill-able, file-able forms.** Another key expectation is the ability to electronically find, fill, and file for all levels of government—federal, state, and local.

In general, the business community saw the government as one body. They do not separate agencies from one another, nor do they separate state and local from federal. Business Gateway will be looking into integrating state and local information into business.gov in the future.

This research phase is instrumental in identifying the key issues for Business Gateway, and will inform future quantitative research, from which conclusions of a more projectable nature can be drawn. It was also noted that this research will continue in the future to continue to validate that the scope of the Business Gateway is in line with the needs of the business community.

Going Forward

BG's hope is to move away from an agency hierarchy mindset and address issues from the perspective of businesses' functional problems/issues and focus on externally facing goals:

Key Outcomes

- Answer businesses' questions with an on-line “issue-based” search and information organization capability.
- Provide information and resources about how to comply with the most burdensome rules and regulations (i.e. organized links to plain-language, regulations, forms, and agency guidance).
- Provide electronic information submission.
- Provide related information and resources that help business do business.

As the Business Gateway moves forward, the activities for FY05 were presented. The planned activities are the following:

- Upgrade business.gov
- Plan to align business.gov, forms.gov, and other related eGov initiatives
- Identify top compliance issues for the compliance tool
- Address requirements of the Small Business Paperwork Relief Act
- Identify plain language resources, compliance assistance, [data collection, and data harmonization]
- Design contact phone numbers and FAQ capability

Business Gateway's next steps are to complete the functional requirements for each outcome that has been presented. This process will include Advisory Group and Governance Board members on a voluntary basis. More information regarding the times and dates of these working groups will be sent out shortly.

Key Upcoming Decisions

Validate spending breakdown plan for FY06. Agencies should have received a spreadsheet with the breakdown of spending for FY06. This meeting was designed to let the funding agencies know what they are buying. The process to validate this breakdown will be completed via work group.

Sustained funding work group meetings. A series of meetings will be held to review and validate BG's current allocation model and examine alternative funding models. The meeting schedule is as follows:

- 6/15 1pm-3pm OCIO Conference room, SBA 4th Floor
- 6/22 1pm-3pm OCIO Conference room, SBA 4th Floor
- 6/29 1pm-3pm OCIO Conference room, SBA 4th Floor

Validate FY07 funding approach. The approach is to take the recommendation that comes out the working group to the Advisory Board by the end of the month. A special meeting will then be called (either in person or via email/conference call) for a Governance Board vote on the proposed approach. The Governance Board was asked if they are comfortable with the approach laid out.

There was concern expressed by some members of the Governance Board that this process makes the assumption that the outcomes are the appropriate areas of endeavor for funding in the coming years. Justin stressed that these areas were expressed to the Business Gateway PMO through the business community and the general component pieces were already voted upon by the Governance Board during a consensus vote last year. Specifics on the outcomes and outputs Business Gateway is implementing were given to the Advisory Group members.

Review exhibit 300 submission. More information on this will be given at a later date.

Questions?

Q: There was concern that Business Gateway does not seem to be focused around a certain approach. Some were concerned that there is still not a clear idea of what agencies are buying and where we are going.

A: The Business Gateway PMO has laid out specific activities that are going to be tracked against. There is a separate document that went out to Advisory Group members that showed exactly the outcomes and outputs that we are planning to complete.

Q: In regards to the forms catalog, has the scope changed since Business Gateway is not citizen focused going forward?

A: The scope has not changed. The Business Gateway is focused on the business community and the forms catalog is used for the Business Gateway but it is also used by citizens.

Q: Forms processing has been sitting out there without a decision for a long time and because there are monumental costs associated with it, some Governance Board members wanted clarity around this issue.

A: There is a proposed forms processing working group that will be established soon. Justin will send the invite as soon as there is a no, no go decision on whether or not forms processing is in or out of scope for Business Gateway. At this time, forms processing is in scope.

Q: Some Governance Board members would like to see Business Gateway look at other forms processing systems than the LMI AOA. EPA suggested that Business Gateway take a look at their system and others such as DoD and DOJ to glean lessons learned, especially in regards to funding. The Federal Enterprise Architecture was also mentioned as another alternative to explore.

A: Justin agreed that those alternatives mentioned should be taken a look at for lessons learned.

Action Items/Next Steps:

Action Item List			
#	Description	Owner	Due Date
1	Follow up with EPA to discuss next steps for forms processing.	Justin	6/21/05
2	Participate in funding allocation meetings and forms processing strategy meetings. Please let Cameron Hogan know if you are interested.	Partner agencies	Starting 6/15/05
3	Follow up with Charlie Havekost regarding the outputs and outcomes for FY05, 06 and 07	Justin	6/21/05